

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace page 5, first paragraph starting on line 2 with the following paragraph:

-- According to an aspect of the invention, a via contact in a via contact structure is provided to a diffusion region at a top surface of a substrate which includes a single-crystal semiconductor region. The via contact structure includes a first layer which consists essentially of a silicide of a first metal in contact with the diffusion region at the top surface. A dielectric region overlies the first layer, the dielectric region having an outer surface and an opening extending from the outer surface to the top surface of the substrate. A second layer lines the opening and contacts the top surface of the substrate in the opening, the second layer including a second metal which lines a sidewall of the opening and a silicide of the second metal which is self-aligned to the top surface of the substrate in the opening. A diffusion barrier layer overlies the second layer within the opening. A third layer including a third metal overlies the diffusion barrier layer and fills the opening. --

Please replace page 5, second paragraph starting on line 15 with the following paragraph:

-- FIG. 1 is a cross-sectional view illustrating a completed via contact structure according to an embodiment of the invention. --

Please replace page 11, second paragraph starting on line 9 with the following paragraph:

-- The via contact 100 further includes a filler metal 124 disposed in the opening 110 of the ILD 112. Ideally, the filler metal 124 is formed in such way that no void results in the opening 110. Voids are detrimental to the long-term reliability of the via contact 100-structure, as well as those structures to which the via contact is juxtaposed, i.e., the diffusion region 102. Examples of metals for use as the filler metal 124 include tungsten, and aluminum which can be deposited by efficient techniques that result in good filling qualities, such as by chemical vapor deposition (CVD). Tungsten is the preferred metal for a variety of reasons, as will be described further below. --